The
791 pi-mu, a Lolo magician, is invited to perform on this occasion. In every Lolo village there are always one or two families that specialize in magic, a profession hereditary from father to son for many generations. The pi-mu are outstanding personalities among the Lolo. In their houses are kept a number of Lolo scriptures for use in festivals, sickness, fortune-telling, the wedding ceremony, and all kinds of magic performances. The [212] scriptures are in the Lolo written language which survives to this day mainly because of its transmission by the pi-mu from master to pupil. The common people have no occasion to use the written language, which actually does not occupy as important a position in Lolo society as is generally believed.

When there is sickness in the family, the Lolo do not 756 depend upon medicine for a cure, but ask the pi-mu to perform magic to drive off the evil spirits. They believe that [753] sickness is caused by ghosts and goblins, and can be cured through exorcism. During the ceremony, as mentioned earlier, they sacrifice victims, such as an ox, sheep, pig, or [782] chicken, according to the nature of the sickness and the economic condition of the family. To kill cattle or chickens for [574] such an occasion provides the family with an opportunity for a big feast, which helps to vary the monotony of life and a regular vegetable diet.

[46] Praying for rain is an event of great importance. 782 Rain is scarce on the mountains where the Lolo live and culti- 791 vate their dry land. During a year of drought, they pray to the mountain spirit for rain. The Lolo do not have a monothe- [771] istic concept and believe in an unseen world where a ghost or goblin exists in every object. So they invite the pi-mu to perform magic to control the environment around them. When the Han-Chinese pray for rain, they direct their prayers to the dragon-king in the waters; the Lolo, on the other hand, notice [821] that rain comes from the mountain top and so they pray to the mountain spirit. This illustrates how religious ideas are influenced by environment. In praying for rain, they also seek the help of the pi-mu. After having killed a white sheep or a white chicken, they would go up the mountain and from the precipices scatter the blood-splattered white feathers to look like snow while the pi-mu chants the scripture and performs magic to beg for sweet rain. The rainmaking ceremony is very important because it is directly related to their economic life. Insufficient rain will affect the harvest of corn, buckwheat, oats, and other grains and result in a food shortage for the family.

778 is limited to the mysterious quality or the supernatural power of the object without involving any concept of ghosts and spirits.

[94] The belief in the souls, spirits, and ghosts is even 775 more popular and universal in Lolo society. All kinds of sick- 753 ness, death, and misfortune are due to the evil influence of the ghosts. Their names are many: ghosts of persons hanged, ghosts of dysentery, ghosts of persons murdered, su-nieh ghosts, ghosts of strangers, monkey ghosts, headache ghosts, and countless others. All ghosts and evil spirits can cause evil and bring disturbance and harm to human beings. So the Lolo are particularly afraid of the ghosts and have numerous rituals to control them. The spirits are not consistent in their good or bad behavior. Good spirits protect and aid the living, whereas bad spirits could change into ghosts to plague them. 776 After death, family ancestors change into spirits following a soul-delivery ceremony. The original ancestor of the pi-mu is also a spirit who can be invoked to descend to earth. The [782] Lolo do not make offerings to images or worship them. They have no concept of monotheism. All natural phenomena, such as sky, earth, sun, and moon, have spirits, but since these have little bearing on daily life, no ritual for their worship has evolved. The mountain spirit, called mi-hsi in the Lolo language, is comparatively the most important because it controls rain and is always invoked during rain-praying. Different mountains have different spirits who are not interrelated. The [821] Lolo belief in the mountain spirit as an agent of rain control is diametrically opposed to the Chinese belief in the dragon king as the controller of rain. This merely indicates that religious ideas are influenced by the natural environment. The Lolo who live on high mountain tops have observed that the clouds, fog, and rain all descend from the peaks.

Animatism and animism co-exist in Lolo society and 771 together constitute their religious thought. However, they differ in practical operation. On the one hand, magic power relies upon technical devices for its practice, and on the other the individual communicates with the supernatural world through a spiritualistic medium. The Lolo pi-mu is concurrent- ●791 ly a chief priest and a magician. When he recites the scrip- 793 ture to communicate with spirits and when he officiates at 756 sacrificial ceremonies, he assumes the position of a priest and spiritual medium; when he imprecates to subdue ghosts and when he performs ceremonies to cure sickness, he becomes a magician. Actually, the main duty of a Lolo pi-mu is none other than the practice of magic.

191 The pi-mu is a unique figure in Lolo society and quite
193 different from ordinary people in his responsibility. He spe-
156 cializes in religious and magic activities. There is at least one pi-mu in each village, either a black or a white Lolo, but at present most pi-mu are white Lolo. Only a male can become a pi-mu. He goes through a tutorial system, the only kind of formal instruction among the Lolo which requires learning and training. Tutorial instruction is usually handed down from father to son or from uncle to nephew as a family occupation. The pi-mu keeps in the family scriptural books, [179] including those on ancestral legends, fortune-telling, divination, invocation, exorcism, praying for rain, and others, all transmitted and copied in Lolo. [95] The Lolo written lan- [212] guage is not commonly used, and its preservation and transmission are to be credited mainly to the pi-mu.

191 Besides the pi-mu, there is another kind of magician
156 called su-nieh. The su-nieh has no tutor. He is just an ordi-
[187] nary person possessed by a su-nieh ghost that causes sickness or loss of mind, but later, after having sacrificed to it a white sheep and a white chicken in the woods and having recovered from sickness, he becomes a su-nieh. Both men and women can become su-nieh, but the art is not transmittible and also scriptures do not exist. Ordinarily, when a su-nieh performs [155] magic to cure sickness, he beats a sheepskin drum, whirls and dances — his whole body shivering and his mouth muttering chants — moves around and imprecates to the utmost of his ability.

Although the pi-mu and the su-nieh belong to different systems, they have the common aim of practicing magic. The duty of a pi-mu is very complicated, while that of a su-nieh is comparatively simple. We shall describe separately their work and performances to make clear the position of magic among the Lolo.

187 First, let us discuss divination, a form of divine revelation that foretells good or bad fortune. There are two opposite kinds of divination. The first kind is prediction made by the god through human mouth, or the communication of divine will by the priest in forecasting future developments — a type of divination practiced universally in Siberia, Africa, and Polynesia. The other kind is practiced through the observation of physical objects or of animal entrails, bones, skeletons, and other things. In order to foretell the future, the magician has to have strict technical training to enable him to observe the important positions and spots of animal bones and entrails. It is to this kind that the entire system of Lolo divination belongs.

3: Ma
791

AE4 Lolo AE4

[For information on the role of the Pai-mao (native Mayico-religious practitioner) in exorcism among the Black Lolo Cheh-i) of the Wu-ting area in Yunnan, see category 116, pp. 1-12.]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

584 and offered to perform for the amusement of Ah-yee and his household. The whole establishment turned out into the yard, and among them the young girl. She entered as heartily into the fun as any of the others. After the players had gone away Ah-yee discovered that in the band was the young Earth Eye who wanted his daughter. The enterprising young fellow had bribed the strollers to let him be one of their band temporarily, and on their consenting had led them to his would-be father-in-law's home. He enjoyed the adventure very much, and saw all that he wished to see. The father of the girl was wild at what he termed the great insult, and said that if he had found it out in time he would have given the suitor a sound thrashing. I wonder whether the girl repented at not having dressed in her very best on the occasion of the clandestine visit of her lover. Later the enterprising young fellow came to a terrible end, and the girl he wanted was given as second wife to his uncle, a man old enough to be her father.

[463] While I was staying with Ah-yee I noticed that he had a 292 tailor at work making a number of garments. One of these 751 garments was of red flannel and had a number of Nosu words worked on the front. Ah-yee told me that these were a charm which would protect the wearer of the garment whenever he was in a fight or in great trouble. He gave me one such garment later on. I have had no need to test the protective qualities of this magic garment, and am afraid the donor did not believe the yarn he told me about the wonderful red jacket.

791 These great Earth Eyes are frequently the prey of wizards 842 and necromancers. Lo-chee, in spite of his seven wives, had no son. A necromancer was consulted and he gave it as his verdict that the castle was built in the wrong position, so interfering with the hidden influences of the soil. In

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

obedience to this verdict the stern Earth Eye who had so defied all the teaching of the Christians pulled his castle right down, and at great expense rebuilt it less than half-a-mile away. Since the necromancer's advice has been carried out there have been one or two births in the harem, which are always announced as sons. In some strange way these sons of Lo-chee, when they grow up, turn into daughters. Last year there was another bulletin announced, and it was to the effect that one of the Mrs Lo-chees had presented her husband with a son. It is too early yet to know whether the great change will take place with this one also. Let us hope, for the father's sake, that it will remain a son. Possibly if there were an heir to the estates the great Earth Eye would be more amenable to reason and the dictates of humanity.

A few years ago the principal building in another Earth Eye's castle, where Lo-chee's daughter went as wife, formed a peculiar landmark in the district. The castle is built on the extreme point of a steep hill at the foot of which two rivers run to a junction. Except to modern guns, the castle is almost impregnable. In the days when it was built it was so. The main building was all awry. One end of it was nearly twice as wide as the other, and the appearance of the crooked roof, narrow on the north side and wide on the south, was most uncanny. In passing by one wondered what kind of a place there could be on the top of the steep cliff. Wizards had been at work again, and by their advice this bizarre building had been erected in this wild place so difficult of access. No luck has, however, come to the three brothers living there, for in spite of seven or eight wives between them, I have never heard of the birth of a son and heir to the great castle and immense estates.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

what causes the disease. Most of the Chinese and aboriginals are terribly afraid of it, and sometimes take very drastic measures to get rid of it. In a home not far from mine, a husband was taken with leprosy. One night his friends made him dead drunk with the local samshu, and then placed him in one of the flimsily built outhouses. The outhouse was then set on fire, and the drunken leper was burnt to death. All over the West of China cases of leprosy are constantly met with, and the Government has done absolutely nothing to cope with the terrible disease. In fact, in presence of the great diseases which are such a scourge to humanity, China has been almost powerless, and has trusted far more to wizards' incantations than to sanitary or medical reforms. The way in which, at the end of the Manchu dynasty, some of her brightest sons, backed up by full official aid, fought the dreaded bubonic plague, when it invaded Manchuria, gives high hopes that before long this same class of foreign-trained students will fight hard and successfully to lighten the great burden of disease which presses so heavily and disastrously on the people all over the country.

The fact that in Nosuland practically no notice is taken of medicines, and that all diseases are put down to the evil influence of demons, makes the position of the wizards a most important one. Whatever be the disease, the wizard is called in to cast out the demon of that particular disease. The ceremony of driving away the demon of disease is called Kweh-ha. The wizard comes, with all his paraphernalia, to the house where the sick person is. One of the first things he does is to make the invalid breathe on an egg. Then, by means of incantations, the wizard compels the demon of the disease to enter the egg, where it assumes its proper

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

787 shape, and can be recognised by the wizard. He then cuts open the egg and makes a careful examination. From this he can tell what colour of animal, whether ox, sheep or fowl, is needed to be killed, as an offering to the demon. I expect personal preference of the wizard has a lot to do with the colour and kind of animal needed to persuade the demon to depart. I remember a missionary who was travelling among some of these tribes in another part of West China. He found it very difficult to eat and digest the coarsely cooked meat and meal of these people. Whenever it was a fowl for supper he got on fairly well, and at last he used to pray every day that when supper came it might be fowl, and not tough sheep or goat. I expect the state of the wizard's digestion in some way or other influenced the colour and shape of the animal discovered in the auspices of the egg.

When the diagnosis of the egg has been completed the wizard makes a rough effigy of grass, and rubs this up and down the body of the patient, repeating his charms as he does so. In this way the demon is compelled to leave the patient entirely, and enter the straw man. With due ceremony this straw man is then escorted into the open, and the demon is commanded to be off. As his fee for this ceremony, the wizard gets a leg and the skin of the animal which is killed, or sacrificed to the demon of the disease. Seeing ox-skins have become very valuable these last few years, it is no wonder that the wizards are glad when the life of such an animal is taken to grease the departure of the disturbing demon.

791 The profession of wizard is fairly profitable, but it is also not without considerable danger. I realised this one night when I saw a wizard sitting at the back of the house, sheltered

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

by the usual felt cape, and by his side a second wizard, going through various incantations on behalf of his confrère. I was told that in driving the devil away from the sick person this disturbing force refuses to go far unless compelled, and instead of accompanying the straw effigy into the open, and jumping on to any person who might pass by that way, it makes a straight cut to the wizard's person and dwells with him. Hence the second incantations to make sure that the wizard, in curing others, has not done so at the expense of his own health. This fear undoubtedly has its origin in the fact that many of the diseases attended are contagious, and now and again the wizard catches what the patient is suffering from.

There is another way in which the profession of wizard is hazardous. He is supposed not only to be able to drive away demons but to cause them to enter people as well. This perhaps gives him great power, but now and again it leads to his undoing, as any great calamity is put down to his cursing powers. As long as he is powerful enough and of sufficient importance to the lord of the clan, he is strongly entrenched, and cannot be touched. Now and again, however, he falls into disfavour, and then his enemies will do their best to ruin him. I have known cases where severe corporal punishment, if not actual murder, has been visited on these dreaded but no longer powerful wizards. Sometimes one of the chiefs will send for all the wizards in his clan, and will have a great festival, at which the chief thing done is a great cursing of his enemies. When there is such an important gathering of the profession, the pay for a day and a night's cursing is a hundred fowls, a hundred goats and nine oxen. These are all killed and eaten. It

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

791
754

can be imagined that such a carnival of cursing attracts people from all families in the clan. After such a festival all the evils that befall the persons cursed are ascribed to the work of these wizards. As sickness and calamity are all too common, it is not likely that these gentry of the black art will quickly be put aside as failures in their special line.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CHAPTER XXIV

IN THE GRIP OF THE DEMON

791 IN every Nosu clan and connected with every Earth Eye's household there are a number of wizards. The Nosu name for these is Pee-mo. It is very difficult to describe the exact position held by these men. They are something like the priests of the clan in that they stand between the people and the spirits of the unseen world. Yet they can hardly be termed priests in the real sense of the word, for they do not profess to commune with the Heavenly Ruler who is the most powerful of all. They do not bring the sorrows and sins of a people to one who is the arbiter of everybody's fate. They are rather a kind of borderland police who can arrest and send into banishment the spirits that dwell somewhere, where earth and Hades mingle. These spirits can do a lot of harm to the dwellers in this world, and possess something like extra-territorial rights, in that no ordinary inhabitant of this world can rule or punish them. However much they may annoy and harm people, they are outside of their control, and can only be driven away by a class of men who claim special powers to deal with such. If one were not likely to be misunderstood one might say that these Pee-mo act as a kind of diplomatic representative of the country of the spirits of darkness, and only through them can any of these spirits who commit crimes be dealt with. This illustration may seem a bizarre one to many, and yet, if you judge of these Pee-mo by their own claims, they would

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

791 certainly accept such an illustration as corresponding closely to their actual rank.

755 In a certain sense these men are also a kind of medicine men in that they deal with diseases of all classes and claim to cure by going to the real cause of the disease. The majority of them have nothing to do with drugs, and when one looks at the advertisement pages of Western newspapers and reads all the puffing accounts of patent drugs which one knows very well cannot possibly do always all that they claim to do, one wonders whether after all these Pee-mo are not on as high a level, or higher, than the many men who make their money by the sale of drugs which may have quick action but which certainly do not move the cause of many of the diseases which so distress mankind. In giving a wide berth to drugs and herbs, and professing to remove the initial cause of disease, these men are aiming at something which most modern medical men are aiming at. If you put germ for demon, then there is much that is similar in both Nosu Pee-mo and the modern physician. In the disregard and almost contempt for drugs which this class of men display they have strikingly anticipated the trend of the modern medical profession. But in his ascribing all disease to the influence of evil spirits who are often under the control of men like himself, he surely is very old-world in his ignorance.

189 According to these men there is the grip of the demon everywhere, and people are afraid to do many things lest their actions should provoke an outburst from some of these evil inhabitants of both worlds.

An incident we were witness of after watching the séance in the slave's home near Ah-ku's tower convinced one that the wizard believed what he preached. He was sincere in his

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

the mediums and to prove to the people that they could not do all they claimed to do, I offered a large reward to any who would call up the spirit of the dead Englishman so that he, through the medium, could hold conversation with me. This was merely what they every day claimed to do for inquirers of their own people. No one ever claimed the reward. Possibly the native mediums were nervous of the foreigner, or maybe they thought that I should never pay them even if they fulfilled my conditions.

In connection with the wizards of Nosuland there is one thing that is of far more interest than all their séances or communion with demons. They are the possessors of the written language and literature of Nosuland. This is a field that has been almost unexplored, and that possibly holds secrets of immense interest and value to the students of history and philology.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 method of writing. There are some visionaries who imagine that before long China will throw over its method of writing and adopt the romanised method. Such a change is not likely to be made in this generation or the next.

212 While the peoples around China have adopted Chinese written characters, the Nosu have kept to their own. There must have been, in ages gone by, a larger number of people who could read. Now the wizards are practically the only people who have a knowledge of the written language.

There is no such thing as an alphabet in Nosu. The same principle that rules in Chinese rules also in Nosu. Each ideograph represents an idea. The language is monosyllabic. As mentioned before, vowel sounds end the words.

214 [791] Nearly all the books are in manuscript, and are handed down from father to son. The wizards who possess the key to these books are not very eager to pass on their knowledge to others, and I have not heard that others are very anxious to share this knowledge. I have been told that there are one or two Earth Eyes who are able to read Nosu, but I have no personal acquaintance with them. One Earth Eye, who was very friendly, had wooden blocks cut for the printing of a Nosu book, and then printed off quite a number, which he gave away to any who wished for a copy. On the back of the cover was the legend:

> A gift of a book to the princely man,
> With the hope that the princely man will live it out,
> If the princely man does not read the book,
> Will he kindly pass it on to someone else.

The Earth Eye was evidently imitating the Chinese, who look upon the printing and giving away of books as a very potent way of storing up merit in the bank of the other world.

Lolo AE H

101 The derivation of the term Lolo is supposed to be as follows. At the close of the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A.D.) the outstanding leaders among the Man were bestowed the name of Kuei-chu, a term designating the chief who headed the shamanistic ceremonies in sacrifices to spirits. Literally it means "Master of the Spirits". The people of the Lo-tien area of southern Kuei-chou (where the Lolo were dominant) (See Photo 11) then called the Kuei-chu of the Lo Clan by the abbreviated term Lo-kuei ("Lo-spirit"). This term became erroneously changed to Lu-lu and subsequently to Lo-lo.[81]

564 791 212 171 It is very clear, said Eickstedt in 1944, that the source and origin of the Lolo lie in the north. Culture, economy and even physical feature types point toward the north. As the Lolo culture moved southward, it became watered down. The core of the northern group in recent years was built around the so-called Independent Lolo lords of Ta-liang Shan in southwestern Ssu-ch'uan. Here a blood-proud caste of nobility, the Black-bones, who fought, rode, herded horses and ruled, oversaw a stratum of underlings, the White-bones, who took care of the daily bread, and a stratum of slaves. The latter were formed from the intermixture of the original inhabitants with numberless former Han-Chinese who had been robbed and kidnapped and had forgot their heritage and now took themselves to be Lolo. Here in the Ta-liang Shan the singular culture of the entire folk has been expressed most strongly. Intermarriage between castes was punished by death. The witch-doctors and rulers even had an entirely separate script, which, besides serving cult purposes primarily, also had practical uses. But this ended at the Yun-nan borders. The farther south one traveled, the more one found that Lolo independence was reduced and the less there was of social stratification. In places in Yun-nan proper, the script, the horse-herding, and the name Black-bone are completely unknown among the Lolo.[82]

142 The types found among the Lolo in different localities show extraordinary differentiation in significant ways, according to Eickstedt. Thus, in Burma the clear, high Mongol racial element from the South China orbit is unmistakable, and this also is to be found in southeast and southern Yun-nan. In Ssu-ch'uan the middle China element is preponderant among the masses, while in the upper stratum of Blackbones, the tall-statured element with features of high relief, that is, the Europoid type, is clearly discern-